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THE

WORK OF CHRIST;

OR,

THE ATONEMENT

CONSIDERED IN ITS INFLUENCE UPON THE INTELLIGENT UNIVERSE.

BY

ENOCH M. MARVIN, D. D.,
ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH.

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PREFACE.

The philosophy of Prefaces is very simple. An author is profoundly interested in his own book. The thought that is in it may be very meagre and very vapid, but it is not so to him. Every book, I suppose, is the result of one of two processes. Either the thought struggles in the man for deliverance, or the man struggles after some thought that he may make a book. In the first case he is interested in his readers through the thought; in the other there is a garrulous interest—the enjoyment of being heard. In both the book has a history which no one knows but himself—something that the reader ought by all means to be made aware of. Of course the reader is going to be as much interested in the book as he is himself. Any suspicion to the contrary would disparage the reader, and the generous author will be guilty of no such rudeness as that. Is it not in human nature to desire some account of all those things which interest us?

At any rate, it is in human nature to *give* some explanation of one's own work. The very intelligent and interested reader must pause a moment upon opening the book. The author feels confidential with him just at this interesting moment. The man is going to

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read *this* book—he is evidently a man that deserves a little consideration. He must be told some things that will help *him* in the reading, or that will help the *book* in his estimation; or, at any rate, he must hear something that will prepossess him with the *author* of the book.

I have your ear now fairly, my reader, and could entertain myself greatly by a long prefatory chat with you. Not that there is anything very special about this book. There is about as little of history, I imagine, connected with it as with any book that ever came into existence. The most remarkable fact in the case is, the absence of any "pains of parturition."

The thought that is in it has given me profounder satisfaction than any other of a speculative character that I have ever conceived. I began to write about it just from the mere pleasure I had in employing my mind upon it. As I proceeded, I must plead guilty to a growing desire that it might be published.

But much as I could say, and well disposed as I am to communicate just now, I will not abuse your confidence. Yet there is one other statement that I would make. The writing of this little book has been a means of grace to me. What the thought may be to others I know not; in me it has been a living power. I contemplate Christ and His work, and worship God with a deeper joy.

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CHAPTER I.

The Great Mystery.

SECTION I.

Why Should there be Suffering?

The existence of evil has been the grand puzzle of the world. The strongest and subtlest minds have labored at it in vain. Philosophy is painfully conscious of its own failure here. The most dreadful suffering is undergone by man in all places over the earth. Why should this be? Is there a God looking down upon it all? If so, is he impotent or malignant that he should allow it? What horrible doubts these are? Who shall lay them?

There seems to be an almost universal disposition to account for the existence of *suffering* by the fact of *sin*. There is a per-

ception of the relation of cause and effect between these two things. The point of connection may not be very patent, albeit men *feel*, perhaps, more fully than they *see* that there is such a connection. In this, doubtless, we shall find the germ of most precious truth as we proceed. Yet will it not answer all questions at once, for there is a question back of this which must first be met.

SECTION II.

Why Should there be Sin?

Could not God make a world without sin—one that should not be liable to sin? If he could, then why was it not so done? Or if he could not, then why make any world at all? Would it not be better that there should be no world than a wicked one that must suffer so? These questions have been in the human heart, and often upon human lips, in all the past ages. Men *will* ask them. They can not be overlooked.

I shall deal briefly with these problems, so

far as any direct effort to solve them is concerned. In fact, the investigation presented in Chapter II is intended merely to prepare the way for what I shall offer at last as affording the best and only satisfactory solution.

SECTION III.

Cui Bono?

After all that has been written, there are perplexities remaining to such minds as *will* occupy themselves more with unattainable objects than with obvious vital truths. These, perhaps, nothing will satisfy. There is a class of minds, however, that will, by such investigation, be led to broader and happier views, if not to a more settled conviction of truth.

And the christian teacher can not wholly ignore speculation upon these topics. They have been so obtrusively thrust upon the world for skeptical purposes that it is incumbent upon the believer in the christian faith to show that the truth, even in these inquiries, is on the side of our holy religion. It is a maxim

at once and universally recognized as true, that no truth of any one class can clash with any truth of another class. The Christian, therefore, can not stand back and say to any other man, "your truth contradicts my creed, but still I hold it." He must, on the contrary, first examine whether it *be* truth that is paraded against his faith; and if it be unquestionable truth, then he must see whether the alleged conflict between it and his creed exists.

My observation is, that most, if not all, the arguments adduced from the condition of the world against the christian religion bear as hard against any notion of divine government as against the christian theory. They are not arguments, specifically, against christian revelation by any means, but against the justice and beneficence of the Creator; and the defense of our faith loses an important advantage when it unwittingly attacks them, as if they had some special pertinence when directed against itself.

It has long been my conviction, that the unhappy moral and physical condition of our world is more satisfactorily accounted for by the theory of *the fall and the redemption* than by any other hypothesis whatever. My reason is satisfied with it as solving all the harrassing difficulties which beset the subject. In the light of this theory I can see that God is just and beneficent, though there is sin and misery among men. I see that I have nothing to be afraid of but myself. It narrows my apprehensions, so far as my destiny is concerned, down to this point. I see that this dreadful condition of things is not from God, and that the malign source of it is not to be sought outside of myself and the other sufferers. More than that, I see that the Infinite Resources are taxed for a remedy; that the remedy is provided—that it is adequate. All this, and much more, I see by the light of the Atonement.

All this is true when you consider the chris-

tian creed in the lowest and narrowest view of it. But may there not be a broader significance than that which is generally perceived in the great Atonement — a meaning which shall flood the universe with light?

I trust I shall be guilty of no adventurous speculation, that will lightly disregard the checks of revealed truth. I distrust myself too profoundly for that. But when rational conjecture is in harmony with the Bible it need not be overtimid, nor the imagination itself restrain its wing if it but keep within the empyrean of revelation. But I trust the matter of the following pages will show a firmer basis than mere conjecture; and it is submitted in the hope, chiefly, that young and ardent minds, perplexed and disturbed by questions of life and destiny, may find in it a clue to some, at least, of the objects of their inquiry.

CHAPTER II.

Man—Free, Fallen, Redeemed.

SECTION I.

Could not God have made a World not liable to Sin?

I have already promised brevity in the direct investigation of the questions connected with the existence of Evil, but a comprehensive presentation of the matter is necessary to introduce the more important topic which it is my object to submit.

We must speak reverently and with humility when we talk about what God could or could not do. Men sometimes draw inferences from the Divine Omnipotence which are by no means sequences of the fact. Mr. Bledsoe, in the "Theodicy," has put this matter in a very clear light. Some things are not objects of power. There has been by far too much flippant talking upon this matter,

and too little profound, earnest thinking. It is reaching a conclusion with too much facility to say that God could have made man so as to be beyond the reach of sin. It is very convenient, no doubt, to say such things, but he who says them may, perhaps, not know whereof he affirms. Let us tread this ground warily. We may speak unadvisedly with our lips, even when we intend thereby to glorify the power of God. Our shallow speech, though well intentioned, may be found to be derogatory of that power itself. We must be cautious, lest in an attempt to honor God we may be found to dishonor Him.

SECTION II.

Limit of Power.

We are accustomed to say that God's power has no limit, and to infer that, therefore, He could have made man impeccable. Is it so? Is it within the sphere of power to violate essential truth? Can Omnipotence counterwork geometry? Can God lie? No!

Within its sphere Omnipotence can work illimitably; outside of that it can do nothing. The fact of the omnipotence of the Creator is not a sufficient warrant for all sorts of grotesque conjectures as to what He might have done. If we must reason upon such matters, let us get our premises from the whole nature of God, so far as we may be able to comprehend it, and from the character of work we are contemplating. Whether this or that may be done by the Almighty, depends first upon the congruity of the act with His own nature, and secondly, upon all the facts involved in the supposed act. The supposed object of creative power may be such as involves essential impossibilities, and these impossibilities may be either of a physical or moral character. For moral dereliction is as impossible to God as physical absurdity is. The questions involved in this species of speculation, then, are so numerous and complex and subtle that it is no wonder if men of hasty and im-

patient temper should make conclusions before they have seen half the premises, or even if sober thinkers should produce intellectual abortions. Let us be humble and diffident, and pray God that we may not do the same.

SECTION III.

The Creator.

Let me say reverently what my argument requires to be said of the Creator: "Such knowledge is too high for me!" Yet surely we have *some* positive knowledge of Him. May we use it wisely!

Infinite, essential Being! Source of all subordinate existence! In Him is all perfection realized. The Infinite Power, the Infinite Wisdom, the Infinite Love! He can do no wrong.

Men talk about the Divine freedom. Do they understand themselves? Doubtless God *is* free. Yet He *can* do no wrong. In His work He can not transcend the boundary of right and truth. The idea of a God that

might do wrong is monstrous. He is free, but He is not capricious. His freedom is in the perfect poise of His attributes—the infallible adjustment of the true, the right and the good. There is no such freedom as puts character at hazard.

Doubtless He is amenable to no law above Himself, for the law has its highest expression in Himself. His is, therefore, no freedom of wayward impulses, but of a holy nature whose very essence is rightness. We have, therefore, no dread of a heedless, headlong power that may sometimes choose to undo all He once chose to do. "He doeth all things well."

What He wills and does is, therefore, "ever right, ever the best." He made our world, and then inspecting His own work with infinite satisfaction, said: "It is very good." And yet man was liable to sin, and *did* sin. We can scarcely suppose, in an abstract view of the case, that it was best that man should be liable to sin. Should we not rather say

that if he *could* have been created without this liability, it would have been better?—I choose rather to suggest than dogmatize here. We may say that, *in view of all the facts involved*, God saw it was best to do as He did. Doubtless. But that does not untie the knot. Sin is not best—it is not good in any degree. It is evil, and only evil continually, in its nature and results. God may have power and prerogative to bring good out of its consequences; but in itself is no good thing, and out of it, by its own force, can come no good thing. If man *could* have been created free from the possibility of sinning, may we not venture to say, in the light of God's character, it would certainly have been so done?

SECTION IV.

What is Sin?

"Sin is the transgression of the law." Let it be remembered that sin is an *act*. Men seem sometimes to lose sight of this, and

to speak of sin as something that *exists*. It is not a *substance*, but an *act;* not a thing *existing*, but a thing *done*. It is an act against God's law, and so, consequently, against himself.

It is not only an act, but a *voluntary* act. Rightness and wrongness, morally, belong only to this class of acts. For right and wrong, morally, imply personal character, and to this volition is necessary. In other words, the act must proceed from the agent, *and originate with him*, to be his act; and if it be not *his*, it can not affect his character. Moral right and wrong imply something more than conformity or non-conformity to a a rule--that is, that the conformity or non-conformity be *caused* by the subject of it, and not produced by any other agency. There is mechanical rightness in a column cunningly adapted to its uses of support and ornament, and so it has a certain character, and in its way is good. But it was made so,

and had no hand in its own carvings and adjustments, and consequently has no *moral* character. It obeys no law of its own choice and motion, and though it answers its ends well, we can not think of it as we do of a man who *freely* conforms himself to the law that is given him. If the column should fall and precipitate the edifice it supports upon a thousand heads, no one would think of blaming it, for it has no choice, but falls perforce, under the power of external agencies. No man curses the timber, how fatal soever the consequences of the fall. Not so when a man falls. His fall is from himself--his own thought, and choice, and act.

Or if in any case a man's action is involuntary, he is free from blame. This fact commands universal belief. It is an axiom that there can be no sin where there is no volition.

I do not say that there is no *sinfulness* except in mere action. Upon the sinful act

there supervenes a retro-action, which induces a *sinful state*. This is depravity. The understanding, affections, appetites, desires, all become corrupted.

Sin, then, is *voluntary wrong action*, which also results in a sinful state of the mind and heart, which is depravity.

Let it not be overlooked that the inquiry now is, could God have made man free from the liability to sin? We are, therefore, contemplating sin in the individual. At this point we must not be betrayed into perplexities arising out of complications which belong to another part of the subject. All investigation, to be satisfactory, must exclude, peremptorily, such matter as may not be pertinent. It is not always easy to do this. Facts having a natural connection with the topic under discussion solicit attention, but having no bearing upon the *particular aspect* of the topic which forms the vital question in the argument, they tend only to betray us into confu-

sion of ideas, which darkens the investigation. So here the very word depravity suggests the fallen condition of our race, and the whole matter of inherited evil. But perspicuity requires its adjournment to another point in the discussion. We shall better understand ourselves if we confine our attention at this point to the *individual*, and if you please, the *first* sinner. Inherited depravity shall have due attention in its own proper place.

Sin in the individual is an act--it is *his* act. It is his, because it originates with and proceeds from himself. He conceives it, wills it, does it. It proceeds from his person, and can be traced to no other source. Otherwise it would not be his sin.

SECTION V.

Personal Being.

To appreciate adequately the truth set forth in the preceding section, a man must realize his own separate *being*. I am. I. That one letter is to me the most important word

that was ever uttered. It means every thing for me. Blot it out, and that which it signifies with it, and *to me* there is nothing left—no God, no Universe, nor light, nor darkness, nor sound--nothing.

What is this that is uttered when a man pronounces that word--I? Depend upon it, it is no phantom--no shadowy, unreal thing. It is a vital substance. It is a Life, which, though related in some way to all other life, yet stands out from all other--separate, alone. At no point does it merge into another thing. Self. The word has a meaning--what a meaning! In it there are perception, desire, thought, feeling. Pregnant words, every one of them. *An acting self*--the action *voluntary!* The *self* is fully realized in this last statement. Self-impelled. It has objects to pursue, hopes to cherish, fears to combat. It has its own loves, and hatreds, and struggles. It has a destiny!

Its separateness from all other things is

well defined at every point. Through whatever changes the self may pass, there is evermore the conscious I, never lost and never confounded with other things. All other things are marked off from it in an objective relation. It stands out, over against all other things, in friendly or unfriendly relations toward them, to play its own part and accomplish its own purpose.

The man is not to be lost, in the personal significance of his nature, by being considered as simply a portion of the universe. Such, indeed, he is, yet in no sense that modifies the separateness and completeness of individual being. He is a person by himself, howsoever related to other persons and things. Nor is he an infinitessimal part of God, taking shape in time and space. He is just *himself*. He is just what the common man means when he says I. And not even the metaphysician, bewildering and blinding himself in the haze and whirl of Pantheistic sophistries, can lose

the consciousness of the *self* that he is. Not all the confusion of what he sees, and half sees, and scarcely sees at all, and imagines that he sees, not all the din and babel of the articulate and inarticulate voices that he hears; not all his own anxiety to lose and hide himself in some outer or some higher being can hush the I that is forever pronouncing itself in him and by him.

The very cognizance that he takes of other things testifies his own separate being. They are not of him. They are outside, to him. They range themselves around him, some more remote, some nearer, some impinging upon his very substance; but the line between him and them is never obliterated, never indistinct. They impress in many ways the consciousness of the self, but are never confounded with it.

Amid all the magnitudes, and forces, and sublimities, and portents of the universe—amid all the contests, and vexations, and sym-

pathies of local relationship—under the unapproachable heavens and on the mysterious earth, in the sight of men, angels and God, there he stands, by himself and for himself, to do, to enjoy, to suffer what he may or must. It is a grand spectacle, even in the eyes of God.

SECTION VI.

Volition.

This separateness of individual being realizes its highest value in the fact of volition. Vital and intelligent energies, such as man is endowed with, are self-guided. I respectfully submit that freedom means this, or it means nothing. A man's decisions and actions are from himself *and of himself.*

I am not unaware of the metaphysical perplexities that have been raised upon this subject, nor is it my purpose at all to produce an exhaustive treatise upon the issues involved. I shall aim only to get at the heart of the

matter, and leave it to the good sense of the reader.

The controversy in reference to the will is an old one, and has been managed with great dexterity on both sides. It is a rare thing now for any one to deny the fact of man's freedom. There are some, however, whose definitions and explanations are such as to teach only the absence of external constraint in our volitions, while there is something in the very nature of each man that determines inevitably the character of his volitions. The man is free, they tell us, when his choice is from himself, and we are warned off from any higher ground of inquiry, as if it were unlawful. Now, the fatalist might admit all that with perfect safety to his own theory, if you will allow that each separate self is so constituted that a certain character of volitions will be inevitably or necessarily produced by it. For a man is not free if he is necessitated in his volitions, and it matters not a

particle whether the necessity arises out of his own constitution or out of external constraint. In either case the *cause* is placed beyond himself.

The freedom of man is not to be put in comparison with the freedom of the Creator. The choice between good and evil is not before God. The law is not *over* God, but *in* Him. It is the expression of His own nature. There is no such thing as obedience or disobedience with Him. He is the fountain of purity. It were irreverent to think of God as free to do evil.

Not so with the creature. He is *under law*, and the vital question of freedom with him is in respect to his conduct toward God. He may do wrong. The wrong volition is from himself; but is he so constituted as to necessitate volitions of this class? Might the same self that chose to do wrong choose to do right? Is the choice not only from himself, but *of himself*, in such a manner

that the character of it is determined by him, and is not the result of a chain of causes going before? If not, there is no freedom. The fountain that pours a stream out of itself, though the stream is from itself, is not free in the act, because it *must* do what it does. The stream is from the fountain, but it is also from something beyond the fountain. It is of its nature that this result is produced. There is no volition, no choice, for I use these words synonymously. The word volition expresses both the origin of mental activities and the capacity of the mind to determine the course and character of its own movements. It expresses freedom both from external constraint and innate necessity

Was there any thing in the primary nature of the first man to guide his fatal choice in the transgression? The wrong decision was *from* himself; was it also *of* himself as his free act to which he was determined by no fatal bent of his nature? Or was his nature

such that he *must* decide and act as he did? If so, he was depraved before the fall. If so, God made him depraved. No. He was not depraved. He was simply free! He *chose* to do wrong, and it would be an absurdity to say he *chose* to do so because he *must* have so chosen. The two words are not correlative. He *could* do wrong, and did. There was no fatal proclivity to evil beforehand. If so, it must have been impressed on him by his Maker. But evil is contrary to God's nature; it is enmity to God. God can not counter-work Himself, therefore He could not impress evil upon man.

Sin originated with the creature. God had no hand in it. He never did and never can have any thing to do with it but to repress and punish it. It is infinitely abhorrent to Him. It is rebellion against His government. But more of this hereafter.

Man was not made, then, with a nature that necessitated his sin, nor were influences

brought to bear that necessitated it. He was *free*. To be sure he was tempted. But the first sinning creature was not tempted—at least not from without. Nor can temptation necessitate compliance. The tempter can only solicit; he can not compel. He can present motives to sin, but God presents greater motives against it.

Even in our present depraved condition we are free, for the agencies of grace so far countervail our depraved inclinations as to make repentance possible, so that he who lives in sin does so from choice, not necessity.

Great infirmity of will, no doubt, supervenes upon the habitual indulgence of vicious propensities. The subjects of such indulgence often desire earnestly to recover themselves from its dominion, and fail to do so. From this fact some have questioned the doctrine of freedom, and supposed that man's course is constrained by his impulses. But it is to be observed, first, that in such cases

there is an abnormal condition both of mind and body, so that they may not be fairly cited in the argument; and, secondly, even in such cases the man is conscious of a latent power of will which he could assert, and forego the indulgence. And, indeed, this is sometimes, and not unfrequently, done. And this consciousness, always felt, and occasionally exemplified in practice, is a most conclusive proof of man's freedom in his volitions. If in such cases of degeneracy, where, by a long course of evil practice the lower propensities are developed to their greatest activity and power, and the will rendered infirm by disuse, it has still the force to overcome, against such odds, its supremacy must be confessed.

Certainly, great power must be allowed to impulses in their effect on human action, and mere impulse is utterly blind to any question of right or wrong. But every man knows that he *can* resist any impulse, however strong. Or if there are extreme cases of sudden

arousement, allowing no time for thought between the impulse and the act, and the will is overborne by the impetuosity of passion, such cases present a species of momentary insanity, in which a man can not be held responsible; unless, indeed, he is responsible for allowing himself to be in such a moral condition as will admit of so unhappy a phenomenon. Between reason on the one hand, and impulse on the other; between God and law on the one hand, and appetite and passion on the other, the will sits arbiter, *and is supreme.*

I have by no means forgotten the fallen condition of man, nor the declarations of the apostle in the seventh chapter of Romans, "When I would do good, evil is present with me;" "the good that I would I do not, and the evil that I would not that do I." But, certainly, no one will claim that man's fallen condition is his normal one, while even in this condition there is so much power of will, as I have already shown, as to prove its supremacy.

And as I have before said, the grace of God has so far restored the moral equilibrium as to give us the full power of choice in the reception or rejection of the gospel. And upon that hinges the whole matter of our accountability.

Men sometimes give unfair tests of the question. I have been asked if it is possible for a man to will to inflict wanton cruelty upon his child. It is a very rare thing, to be sure, that the force of the will is carried to such an unbridled extent. Men do not often outrage at once reason, affection and interest, by an erratic and wayward assertion of their liberty. Volition very quietly and uniformly goes right where interest, feeling and duty are all on the same side. It is only where there is some conflict that there is any occasion for choice. And yet, monstrous and unaccountable cases do occur sometimes, proving the latent power of will in an appalling manner. And does not every man *feel*

that he has such power? He knows that he will not exert it, but does he not also know that he *could?*

The presence of motives is the condition of the action of will. Men decide in view of motives. And our responsibility lies in the freedom of our choice between good and bad motives. Otherwise volition would be a blind, erratic power, and could not be, as it is, the basis of responsibility. If *all* the motives are on one side, in any given instance, therefore, volition, with great uniformity, takes the course they indicate. But where there are conflicting motives, some urging to one course and some to the opposite, the man's freedom becomes apparent in deciding between them. Nor is there any power in the greatest of several motives to carry the will invariably against the others. The decision may be, and sometimes is, on the side of the weaker motives.

Man is not always free in his *actions*, for

he is often restrained by external agencies. But the will, where there is any occasion of choice, is *always* free, except in abnormal mental states. And hence it is that we estimate a man's character more by what we believe to be in him than by his external life. Whatever his course of conduct under external restraints, if we believe him to be a man of vicious purposes, we set him down for a bad man. His character is determined by his volitions.

Let it be understood that by the term Will I mean a man's power to select among all the various lines of conduct open to him any one for himself, free from any predetermining cause in himself or out of himself, to necessitate his choice of the one he does select or his rejection of another. The mind is in no sense constructed upon mechanical principles. You can not, as in mechanics, supply so much power in a given direction and be certain of the result. It is true that good influences

steadily brought to bear, especially in early life, generally produce good results upon character. The will, as I have before said, is not a mere wayward power. It acts in view of motives, and while motives are not of the nature of mechanical forces, yet the reason, judging of the value of the different motives, makes *intelligent* choice possible. Hence a certain degee of uniformity is usual in individual action and character. If it were not so, no government would be possible. There is some uniformity of results, both from right and wrong influences. But this uniformity is not mechanical precision. Far from it. The will may become wayward, and often does so.

But where the mind is in a normal condition, the understanding clear, the affections and appetites duly adjusted, and *all the motives bear in one direction with great force*, the will rarely, if ever, sets itself

against them. We shall have use for this fact after a while.

I have said, in section four, that "moral right and wrong imply something more than conformity or non-conformity to a rule—that the conformity or non-conformity be caused by the subject of it, and not produced by external agency." Now if a man's decision to do an act violating the law is the certain and necessary result of some malign tendency of his nature, that *tendency* is the cause of the act. That tendency itself must have been produced by some anterior cause, and in no just sense, if such be the fact, can it be traced to the man as the actual and responsible cause. But men are free, without any necessitating tendency toward any given class of volitions. In this *freedom* is to be found the *cause* of a man's actions. They belong to him, not as light belongs to the sun, or heat to fire, or leaves to the tree, but in a much higher sense. *They originate with him.*

The leaf upon the oak of to-day may be traced back to the first oak, and so to God, as the final cause, for at no point does any *free agent* intervene between it and the Creator.

But between God and man's act comes the man himself—*free*. His personal existence was caused by God, but that existence, being free, is itself *causative*. His acts are his own. They originate with himself. So of all intelligent beings. And wherever personal freedom is there is *causation*. And where a creature is endowed with this high quality, he is accountable to the Creator for the character of his acts.

God created intelligent beings who *could sin*, but established no chain of causes to produce sin. Therefore, it is false to say that God *caused sin*. It will not do to say that as God caused the sun and the sun light, so He caused man and man sin. The cases are not at all analogous; for the sun is not free, and therefore, not an originating cause, but

merely a link in a chain of causes. Man, on the contrary, being free, is an *originating* cause. His actions are his own, for the reason that they can not be referred to any thing beyond him as giving direction to them. *They originate in his freedom.*

SECTION VII.

Origin of Sin.

We have now discovered *the origin of sin.* Much has been said and much written, to the infinite perplexity of good men, on this subject. I have little to add. In the volition of intelligent free agents sin originated. Many questions may be put as to the circumstances under which the first sin was committed, but the most complete knowledge of all the facts could not affect the matter. It will but serve to confuse our minds to ask what *caused* the first sinner to sin. There may have been something that *occasioned* it, but he alone *caused* it, and the infamous

distinction of originating sin must be his forever.

Any particular seed will produce, by a vital necessity, a particular species of plant, so that the seed does not originally cause the peculiar nature of the plant, but that cause must be found in something that went before and endowed the seed with the special functions that should produce just that plant. Not so with the free mind. It was endowed with no function to necessitate the production of evil purposes and actions. It produces them of its own suggestion. It originates the movement.

We must not forget what has already been stated, that sin is an act, and a mental quality resulting from an act. It is not a thing made, but an act done. "Sin is the transgression of the law." The law is God's, the transgression is man's.

The more we look any where else for the "origin of sin" the more perplexity will we find.

SECTION VIII.

Liability to Sin a Necessary Incident to the Human Constitution.

Man must have been made essentially different—so that he would have been something else and not man really—to preclude the possibility of sin. He must have been constituted an *involuntary* being.

In that case there could have been *no moral government.* Physical necessity must have been the only law. There could have been no sin certainly—no more could there have been virtue. Under such a constitution there could be no disobedience—nor could there be obedience in the proper sense of the term. There could be only forces and their results.

Is such a condition compatible with the existence of spiritual essences? Is not spontaneity of action essential to spiritual being? It does seem so to me.

This is true of the Divine Essence. But

in Him this spontaneity is in no danger of coming into conflict with the law, because He is the source of the law. His volition *is* the law. In subordinate beings, on the contrary, spontaneity has for a necessary incident the possibility of conflict with the supreme will, which is the law. For the law is not subjective in them, as in God, but objective to them. Therefore it is possible, and must be so, inasmuch as they are free, for them to assume at will any attitude toward it. They may obey or not. There is nothing in them to necessitate the one more than the other of these results.

In the unfallen man, no doubt, the tone of the affections and appetites was favorable to obedience, and had he been true to himself he would have been faithful to his Creator. But the desire for knowledge—not in itself wrong—was made the ground of temptation. Knowledge seemed to lie in the direction of disobedience. Here were contending motives,

and so a demand for the exercise of choice. On neither side did the motives amount to compulsion. The man was free. He could conform to the healthy tone of his own affections, or he could do violence to this normal state of the heart, by enthroning over it the desire of knowledge. This he did.

It is to creatures endowed with this self-impelling capacity that moral government is adapted. Physical laws are not adjusted to them. Force, and the inevitable effect of force, are the essence of this class of laws. They are never disobeyed. Their supremacy is in the single fact of *force*. Moral law, on the other hand, addresses a free person, through motives, and may be resisted. Its supremacy is secured by a final resort to penalties. These penalties are of the nature of physical laws, for their administration proceeds by mere force. But when a soul comes under this mechanical dispensation violence is done to its very nature, and the

dreadful compulsory state to which it is reduced is called death.

The mind perceives, intuitively, that moral law belongs to a sphere infinitely higher than physical law. The one is a government of *persons*, the other of *things*. In moral government there are justice, authority, protection, reward, addressing an intelligent being capable of responding to these high facts. In physical government there is just simply power on one side and passivity on the other. The reciprocation in the one case is between Divine authority and intelligent volition — in the other between power and its object.

Where there is moral law, then, there must be intelligent, free subjects. In other words, there must be persons. Man must be what he is. *He must be* FREE. The corollary of this is, *he must be capable of sinning*. This is as inevitable as mathematical truth, and it is pure folly to say that God could ordain it otherwise. It is affirming that of power which

is not in its nature. The very existence of moral government, then, and of creatures capable of this sort of government, involves the possibility of sin.

To avoid the possibility of sin, the Creator must be ruled down to the production of such creatures as are legitimately governed by mere *force*. There must be none created of that high order that can recognize and freely respond to revelations of justice, truth, love, mercy and authority. The universe must be stripped of all its divinest and most precious meaning.

If any should say that the moral attributes of God might be so displayed as to address the soul with such power as would enforce obedience—that such motives might be supplied as would be an effectual guard against temptations to sin, I reply—

1. Any *enforcement* of obedience brings us back to the reign of physical law--mere force. It makes the soul act in a mere me-

chanical way. But we have seen that spontaneity is an inherent quality of spiritual essences. This is an averment of our deepest consciousness. We have also seen that an act can have no *moral* character except it be *voluntary*. No matter what the method of enforcement be, whether by the agency of irresistible motives or otherwise, the very fact of *enforcement* destroys the voluntariness of an act, and, as a consequence, leaves in it no moral quality whatever.

2. Yet it is true that where the motives in any case are fully understood, and all on one side, the mind *does* almost always choose conformably with the motive.

3. God's moral attributes can be revealed to man only in words or works. In both methods God did reveal himself to the first man in such a manner as to supply motives of the right sort, and I can not doubt that the manifestation God made of His attributes was as full as it was possible to make it in the

works of creation and Providence, and also in a revelation by the means of language. The occasion of a more touching expression of His character did not then exist.

4. *Man's sin furnished that occasion.* The atonement is just that highest expression of God which furnishes motives the most effectual that can be presented to intelligent creatures. I shall enquire hereafter what may be hoped for from these motives.

5. The very elements of his spiritual nature supplied the occasion of temptation. It could not have been otherwise. The opportunity to gain knowledge before one so constituted was a strong enticement. The motive was a powerful one, and to have been secure from that motive he must have been created something less than man. Now, here is the condition of choice--motives on each side. From the very fact of his freedom, it is in his power to choose either.

The creation of spiritual beings, then, rendered the possibility of sin inevitable.

And may we not say, that if the work of creation had stopped short of this great act--the production of spiritual essences--there would have been no end reached that we can conceive of as being worthy of the creative intelligence? The material universe, with all its beauty and grandeur, has no significance until you contemplate it as the theatre of intelligent life. The mind can not rest upon anything short of this, as the object which God proposed to himself in His great work.

SECTION IX.

How Supremacy is Maintained in Moral Government.

Does not the liberty of the subject, in moral government, put the authority of the ruler in peril? It does not; for sovereignty maintains itself in the last resort by Power. The offender, proving himself unworthy of a government of motives, is degraded to the level

of physical control, and the supreme authority secures itself by the infliction of penalties. Authority may be resisted in the first instance, but it falls back upon Power for the effectual assertion and vindication of itself. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." It shall be placed under a *regime* that disregards its freeness, violates its spontaneity, and dominates it by mere force. Thus is violence done to its highest and most essential nature, and so it suffers *death*.

This is the bound set to the freedom of the creature--the barrier which secures the throne of God against the rebellion of His subjects, --the safeguard of the universe against Anarchy.

That is a very unworthy view of the Divine Sovereignty which represents it as being unable to maintain itself otherwise than by eternal decrees, putting the course of events and actions in grooves from the beginning. God is not so nicely and ticklishly poised upon

His throne that He must dread to be jostled by the hostile act of free creatures. He has resources of power and wisdom to provide against every emergency. It is His prerogative to interfere with the freedom of His creatures at any point where He may see it necessary. He will not suffer the peace of the universe to be broken with impunity. Those who despise His authority will find that they are "rushing upon the thick bosses of His buckler."

Civil governments proceed upon the same method. The State does not compel obedience, but checks crime with a strong hand. It utters its will, sets the motives of good citizenship before the subject; but beyond this it does not proceed until the criminal act is committed. Till then the citizen is free--free to commit that act. Then comes coercion. The aid of force is called in in the interest of the law.

So is man free under the Divine Govern-

ment--free even to commit sin--to disregard the supremacy of God. But if he will not duly reverence that supremacy as a free agent, he must bow under its last assertion in the deprivation of his liberty.

It is a dreadful alternative for a being of the essence of whose nature is the attribute of freedom. It touches and blights his very life. It violates his nature. But it is the only expedient by which the Sovereign can maintain himself and secure the interests of moral government.

SECTION X.

Inherited Depravity.

This whole matter is greatly complicated by the fact of inherited evil. Not only pain, and sorrow, and misfortune come to us irresistibly, but there is also a deplorable tendency to moral evil inherent in the spiritual constitution. It is, in fact, more than a mere tendency to evil. Evil itself is inwrought into our very being as we come into the world.

It is extremely difficult to state precisely what this inherent depravity--this "original sin"--consists of. In general terms, it is alienation from God. The whole mind and heart go after earthly things. God is not loved. The creature is set above the Creator.

This is the natural condition of man since the fall, and if he were left in this condition, we may admit that he would not be free in regard to matters of religion. The will would be impotent. For there seems to be a sort of spiritual paralysis--a want of power even to perceive or desire that which is holy. Spiritual motives take slight effect upon the mind.

Man is in an abnormal, morbid condition, spiritually. A malignant disorder of the soul has possession of him. He is full of "wounds, bruises and putrifying sores."

Every descendant of the first man is in this condition. It is the fruit of the first sin. In committing that act of disobedience, Adam was the representative of his race. A sinful act,

as I have before said, induces a sinful state. And so intimate is this state--so thoroughly does it inhere in our nature--that it is transmitted from father to son. It comes to us through the representative relation of our first father to his posterity.

But we have asserted the separate personality and responsibility of each individual. How does this consist with the hypothesis that one man representatively involves the whole race in such dreadful evil? Is not my personality sunk in my relation to this representative man?

It might be legitimate here to appeal to that ultimate arbiter—consciousness. I am conscious of my separate, individual relation to law.

Yet, also, am I strangely and most intimately related to other persons, and in a way that affects deeply both character and well-being. In the matter of property, of education, and to a very large extent of character

also, the child is greatly dependent upon the parent or guardian. The condition of a whole nation is determined by the character of its rulers and representative men. If they foster industry, commerce, education and virtue, the people will be prosperous and happy; and individual development will correspond to the influences brought to bear. A man born and reared among savages must, per force, be a savage.

In short, the mental, moral and physical condition of a man are largely influenced by his relations with other men.

The hypothesis of a representative relationship between men is, then, in keeping with our observation of facts. The principle, out of which the fact grows, may lie somewhat deeper than we are well prepared to fathom. Still that it is a fact no one can deny. And in the light of this fact it seems eminently reasonable that the *first man*—the parent of the race—should stand in a vitally represen-

tative relation to the rest. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin."

But what becomes of personal responsibility in view of this fact? In answer to this I remark—

1. With respect to the condition resulting from our relations generally, there remains large room for individual liberty. The savage must, from his surroundings, be a savage of necessity. But it is within the scope of his own liberty to be a very good savage, or a very bad, or an average one. He can not but take on the general type of the life in the midst of which he is developed, but there *is* large variety of individual life under the type. With respect to the law that comes to him he is free.

So with all men. Within the limit of circumstantial restraint there is always more or less scope for free choice and action. So far as sheer circumstances mould a man, he is *not*

accountable; so far as there is spontaneity, he *is* accountable.

2. With respect to our depraved condition, as it results from our connection with the first transgressor, and the spiritual impotency for good therefrom resulting, I have several things to say.

First. Our Creator has provided a second Adam, whose representative relation to us places us on a footing as advantageous as if we had never been involved in the fall.

Secondly. The gracious influences of the cross so far countervail our depraved propensities as to make repentance and salvation possible to every man.

Thirdly. I can not suppose that the human family would have been permitted to multiply under the fatal influences of the fall but for the counteracting agencies of the redemption.

Thus even fallen man is graciously endowed with the capacity to act for himself in respect to the claims of the Divine Government, and

those claims, through the Gospel, have been adjusted to his condition. Hence, all are without excuse, and "every one of us must give account of himself to God." And herein is the force of our Savior's upbraiding accusation: "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life."

The result of all which is, that though the matter is complicated in the details of it by the fallen condition of man, in the end the result is just the same, so far as his freedom is concerned. The disabilities of the fall are so far counteracted as that man acts freely in accepting or rejecting salvation.

SECTION XI.

The Atonement.

Our investigation has brought us quite up to the stupendous fact of the *Atonement*, which is, I verily believe, the key of all the mysteries which cluster about the existence of evil. We have seen that by virtue of it free-

dom remains to man in his depraved condition. Beyond this it discloses a glorious fact in a new and most affecting manner. That fact is GOD'S LOVE TO HIS CREATURES.

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." *Behold the gift!* It at once declares the *fact*, and gives the *measure* of the love of God. "He gave His only begotten Son"--gave Him to us, and for us! In this the christian revelation outdoes, immeasurably, all the suggestions of natural religion. The mind that receives the grand fact of Redemption can never deeply question the beneficence of the Creator. He can not regard the Deity as a Malign Power. There may be much in the divine administration that has a sinister seeming, and that he can not fully understand. But this resplendent exhibition of love overcomes all such perplexities. In its light he can rejoice, and shout "God is love" in the face of every contradiction.

But the Redemption is not completed. Man

is not saved by a mere act of beneficent power. Being free, he must himself respond to the saving agencies. The Atonement is complete; but the ministries of grace set on foot by its means are in the midst of their work, and human activities must co-operate with the Divine in order to the great result. The good and evil are in their death-struggle. The facts arising under this state of things are very complex. No wonder if there should be much that neither you nor I can comprehend. In this there is nothing to discredit faith--there is only scope for its exercise. If you discard the Atonement you still have the same unhappy facts to account for; and, in that case, you have nothing to help you in the solution. But to the Christian the Atonement is a great sun rising upon this darkness. God did create man liable to evil--He could do no otherwise if He created *such* a being as man. Man did actually fall into evil--but in that sad state God pursues him with infinite loving pity.

His Son becomes incarnate for our redemption.

I do not claim that, up to this point, we have any help from the atonement in the solution of the dark questions of our existence, beyond these two facts.

1. That it clears the Divine administration of all blame in connection with the depraved condition of man. It furnishes an ample remedy against the evils of the fall.

2. It is a glorious disclosure of the fact that *God is love.*

And consequent upon these two facts is this proposition: *That the christian theory of the fall and the redemption, furnishes, beyond all comparison the most satisfactory solution of the existence of evil that has ever been submitted to the mind of men.*

But I am anticipating. The meaning of the Atonement will be more amply considered in another chapter.

SECTION XII.

Is it well that Man was Made?

Man was created with those sublime endowments which necessarily involved the possibility of sin--and the catastrophe followed! The fearful possibility has become a fact.

And now, in the midst of his sin and sorrow, man *will* call in question the work of his Maker--he *will* ask, "Is it best that I was created, and that my race is in existence?"

To a mind already embittered and angry against God and his work, and disposed to cavil, it may be impossible to make an answer that will be acceptable. Those there are who, in their wretchedness, and shame, and guilt, feel that to them, at least, life is no boon. They have been beaten back and baffled in all their proudest aspirations, and blinded by selfish vanity and lust, so that life is only a miserable disappointment. There are some of whom our Savior said, "it had been better for

them if they had not been born." They have attempted to accomplish life's end by thwarting God's methods. To them in their discomfiture--in the agony of defeat and overthrow--in their perverse determination to fight it out against God--it may never become apparent that "He doeth all things well."

But to such as may have gone with us in the investigation up to this point, and are ingenuously disposed to accredit God's plans, the following conclusions will be apparent:

1. Life becomes a curse to no man but by his own fault.

2. God has made an infinite outlay of mercies to forestall our self-destruction. He has given his Son to redeem us.

3. Life, in intelligent intercourse with the Creator, and realizing the destiny to which He invites us, is a glorious thing. It *is* worth while to exist, even amid the hazards of temptation, with these grand opportunities.

4. The miseries of those who trifle with life's

sacred hopes are no good ground of fault-finding with the creative work, so fraught with potential good for all, and actual good for many--life on so high a level as to recognize and rejoice in the Infinite Life--life sunning itself in the Infinite Light.

5. After all, the mere *fact* that the world has been created, is sufficient proof that it was right and wise. There can be no satisfying view of God short of this, that every attribute of essential *being* has its ultimate expression in Him. In Him, then, is the ultimate wisdom and the ultimate love. The end of all right-thinking in this direction is, that God's work is right, and that we need no better evidence of the fact that it is right than the mere fact that it is His work. It is our wisdom to accept our own existence with gratitude, and to strive after the high ends proposed to us by the Creator.

6. But God can not be displeased when we reverently inquire into His methods. He is

glorified in our understanding, so far as we grasp His plans and appreciate Himself.

SECTION XIII.

Speculation within due Limits, right.

The speculations upon which I propose to enter in the next chapter are designed to ascertain, if possible, something with respect to God's purposes and dispositions as they appear in the Atonement. I trust I shall not be over bold. The Bible contains the only positive formula of truth in religious matters. All speculation must check itself at the point where it threatens to come into collision with that Book. If a man's reason conducts him to the clearest conviction of the inspired character of the Bible, it must be the standard of Divine truth for him ever after. This is my case. The claims of the Holy Scriptures have been fully admitted in my profoundest thought, and have become, therefore, the basis of Faith.

What I have ventured to propose in the following pages keeps this fact in full view.

But I can not allow that my theory *is* mere speculation. There seems to me to be some positive intimation of it in the Scriptures. I claim not only that it does not clash with any truth of Revelation, but that, if not positively set forth, it is at least strongly suggested in the Word of God.

The principal thought in my theory is not original with me, though I have never seen any discussion, nor even an elaborate statement of it. I simply offer my reflections, confident that whatever of good sense and truth may be in them will be accepted and valued by candid men.

CHAPTER III.

The Atonement—Its Object—The Extent of its Results.

SECTION I.

The Atonement primarily Designed for Man.

We have seen that God, in the last resort, maintains His authority by *force*. But in the case of Man, He has provided also another method—one which contemplates the pardon of sin. The Son of God became incarnate that He might be the Reconciler. Our sin was laid on Him. He suffered our penalty. Upon this basis pardon is offered to all men. And it is only upon the final rejection of Christ that any man is made to suffer the consequences of his own sin. The Atonement is a supreme effort of love to bring lost men back

to their true relations with God. But there is no coercion in it. Men may refuse this method, and then nothing remains but their subjugation. *If they will not be reconciled, they must be subjugated.*

The Atonement is set over against the fall. It stands upon the representative principle. The first man sins. If he shall suffer the full consequences of this act, he can have no posterity. The effect will begin and end in himself. But God introduces the Atonement. The penalty is suspended. Children are born. The human race is multiplied.

We can not doubt that this multiplication of men, under a fallen condition, stands in immediate connection with the Atonement. God would not have suffered a single man to take existence under such disabilities if He had not provided the remedy. The first representative personage involves us—the second extricates.

I doubt not that man is the only being ac-

tually redeemed by the death of Christ. *In our nature* He became subject to the law—*for us* He died. It is man alone that is thus saved from sin.

But may there not be an indirect result of the atonement wider than this?

SECTION II.

Conservative Effect of the Atonement.

May we not safely say that it is as important to *prevent* sin as to rescue the sinner after the fact of his guilt? And may it not be one office of the Atonement to forestall rebellion in those regions where it has never occurred? Perhaps upon examining the history and character of this great Act in the government of God, we may discover that it is as perfectly adapted to this object as to the more direct one of saving those already involved in guilt. Nothing strikes or gratifies the intelligent christian more than this fact: that the Plan of Salvation is exactly contrived

to meet all the emergencies and guard all the interests connected with man's redemption. He discovers that the act of pardon betrays no weakness—that it is not the result of a mere amiable attention to the miseries of the sinner while other vital interests are forgotten. It is not a mere loose administration of clemency, that may overlook the safeguards of executive authority and allow crime to "run riot" in the universe. The heavy hand is not removed. Sin is not treated as a trivial thing. The death penalty is not, in a single instance, set aside. So deeply is this true that even the Son of God himself, when he undertook to save man from his sins, could accomplish it only by dying in his place. No one who understands this great fact can ever doubt the fidelity of God to those immutable principles which must be inviolate in order to a perfect, or even safe, administration of government. If our faith in the ultimate Justice and the ultimate Truth, as they have their expression in the ultimate

Existence, could once be shaken, then there could remain for us no ground of faith whatever. Or if in the ultimate Existence, which is God, there could be shown to be shortcoming, and it could be demonstrated that Truth and Justice are not ultimate (that is, absolute) in Him, then the last guarantee of good government would be swept away, and the last hope of intelligent creatures for safety by means of an administration, which should be an immutable protection against evil, must perish.

Against this the Atonement gives assurance. Even the Son of God, when he assumes our sin, must "taste death." Not even He could stand in the sinner's place without touching the sinner's doom. Not HIS case even could be made exempt. Then Justice in God is ultimate, and the universe is safe. Right and wrong can never be confounded in the Divine Administration. "God can be just and the justifier of him that be-

lieveth" in Jesus. "Justice itself can justify the unjust" through the intercession of the immaculate Sufferer. Sin may be pardoned in them for whom the substitute died.

Now, if we should discover in the death of Christ an equal adaptation to the prevention of sin amongst those who have never fallen, will it not enhance, in our eyes, the glory of the Divine Administration? "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What if it should appear that that same supreme expression of love that has our world for its first object, is too full and ample to be confined within this limit and overflows upon the universe? What if it turns out that this agency of redemption for us is a conservative agency for all those intelligent creatures who have never sinned, and that the universe is to be held in its allegiance to God by this means?

It is certainly, at least, not impossible that

the life and death of the "Man of Sorrows" have all this meaning. The supposition is not absurd. It may be true. The waves of infinite love, agitated by the death-pain of Jesus, may wash all the shores of eternity and of being. The mind throbs and glows with joy in contemplating it as a mere possibility.

SECTION III.

Community of Intelligent Natures.

There seems to be a community of all intelligent natures, which favors the supposition, that any event of vital interest to one class must have some meaning for all. It can scarcely be doubted that there is this community of nature. All are constituted upon one model. There may be many modifications, but in the essential elements of their nature all intelligent creatures are certainly alike. The intellectual, affectional and volitional attributes are, I doubt not, essentially the same

in all. The intercourse of angels with men, as set forth in the Scriptures, indicates this. Whatever accidental differences there may be between them and men, the basis of conscious life is the same. Understanding, reason, memory, love, gratitude, adoration, joy, sympathy, repugnance, volition, enter into angelic life.

"Men are allied
To angels on the better side."

And those superior beings recognize the relationship. They interest themselves in us in the most hearty manner. The scripture account of their ministry on the earth clearly indicates this.

They are subjects of the same government. Incidental differences of administration, adapted to the different circumstances of the case, do not interfere with the essential unity of the Divine Government. There can be no reasonable doubt that the decalogue is essentially the constitution of the moral government of the whole universe. To love God supremely

and his fellow as himself, is the standard of right for every intelligent creature. The manifestation of this in obedience to God and in affectionate services rendered to fellow creatures constitutes right living in heaven as well as on earth. Some variation of specific law necessarily arises out of the variety of condition and circumstances in the case of different classes of beings. But the essential principles of the law are the same for all, because the nature of all is essentially the same.

It is not, therefore, at all unreasonable that any great event in the government of God should have some bearing upon the interests of its subjects in every part of it. And the incarnation of the Son—God infleshing himself—lowering himself to the human and raising the human to himself, must certainly be regarded as an event of the very first rank in the history of His government. The more so as this event is the central fact of a great departure from the ordinary course of govern-

ment. The Divine administration of the affairs of our world is exceptional and anomalous. Sin is not met by the prompt enforcement of the penalty. Crime has apparent impunity. Good and evil trench upon each other, and are mingled in the most grotesque and revolting manner. Wrong is often triumphant and regnant. It seems certain that God has always heretofore maintained the same well-defined separation of the good and evil in fact as distinguishes them in principle.

This anomalous state of affairs is a necessary incident of the redeeming agencies appointed for the salvation of man. But so grave an irregularity—so vital a departure from the ordinary course of law, must stand in connection with some grand purpose of the Creator. And it can certainly be no matter of surprise if we discover that this purpose contemplates a result beyond the destiny of one world. Indeed, we should rather expect to find it a central fact, reaching in its

effect the utmost limit of being in space and duration.

SECTION IV.

Angelic Interest in the Work of Christ.

"The angels desire to look into these things." This can scarcely be the mere interest of curiosity, and it may involve something more than sympathy. It might be the interest of holy natures in this strangest and most touching manifestation of God, and it *might* also include a direct personal interest of their own in the whole matter. It is clearly implied that there is in the advent and sufferings of Christ somewhat more than they comprehend. There are depths they have not fathomed. Long before they witnessed the Birth in Bethlehem and shouted over it, "glory to God in the highest," they had been employed as messengers to men to prepare them for the great event. But it seems that not only the prophets, but the angels even,

"knew not" the high import of the prophecy. They knew God was preparing some great work, and quivered with speechless joy upon each new development in connection with it, until in the manger they saw the wonder of the universe and raised the shout, whose echoes are still mingling with "the music of the spheres." They hung upon his steps and watched Him until they laid their loving wings about Him in the Agony, and hovered in the air, astounded spectators of the Cross. They certainly knew what was the immediate purpose of all this—the redemption of man; but connected with it there were—and this they knew—things they had never seen. There were discoveries yet to be made. Was there some perception of the fact that their own destiny stood in some way connected with the Cross?

One of them "rolled the stone away" from the sepulchre, and pointed the women to the empty tomb. "Behold the place where they laid Him." The heavenly host received Him

when he ascended up, and welcomed Him as a conqueror. "Lift up your heads ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in." And, so "the Lord, the Lord mighty in battle," was received from the bloody field just won, and crowned and throned with the adoration of celestial Princedoms.

In the visions of Patmos how incessantly angels come and go and work amid the agencies of redemption. And in the last day it is a mighty angel, who, with one foot upon the earth and one upon the sea, lifts his right hand to heaven and swears by Him that liveth forever and ever that time shall be no longer. The final blast of the trump of God shall be sounded by an angel. "All the angels of God" shall accompany Christ when He comes to wind up the affairs of His government on earth, and in the midst of the Judgment scene "the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just."

From this intimate connection of angels with the history of the Atonement from first to last I raise a presumption—and claim for it only the value of a presumption--that they are in some way personally involved in its results.

SECTION V.

History of Sin.

Fully in keeping with the theory of the community of nature and interest among all intelligent creatures, set forth in a preceding section, is the fact that sin was introduced into our world by the agency of a being of another class--the devil. Not only do good angels interest themselves in man's case, but malignant angels, also, do the same, with a very different feeling, no doubt; but still the fact of interest manifested by them, though it be an evil interest, betrays a species of community. There must evidently be a com mon understanding of facts between them,

and a common appreciation of motives, or the one could not have tempted the other. The tempter could otherwise have had no access to mind or heart.

But the history of sin has a still more direct bearing upon the matter in hand.

It may be that we have not this dreadful history in full. What we do know is that, first, angels sinned, and secondly, *through their agency* man was induced to sin.

At this point *sin became aggressive.* God had made a new world, and a new race of intelligent beings to inhabit it. A malignant creature, prepared by previous defection from God for such work, set himself to the task of alienating this new creature from the Creator, and succeeded. Sin became enterprising and infectious. Is creative beneficence to be forestalled thus? Is the Infinite Love to be defeated?

Just at this juncture, *when sin becomes aggressive,* God sets up a standard against

it. Just at this point, where the tide of evil begins to overflow, God raises a breakwater for the protection of the universe. Just where the legions of the enemy organize and begin the havoc of invasion, the Captain of Salvation meets them.

Is there no significance in this history? That the Atonement should come in *just here*, does that mean nothing?

I can scarcely doubt that the earth is the battle field of the Universe--the Marathon of Jehovah's Empire. The supreme conflict culminated upon Calvary.

Dignity is not in magnitudes, but in events. The earth ranks low in the planetary system in point of size, but it is the place of first consequence in the history of God's government. It is the centre of universal observation and interest. Here transpired the great event that stands first in dignity and value, and in the extent of its consequences. Here the Champion of the invaded and threatened Universe

girded himself and met the adversary. Here He toiled, and fought, and suffered, and died, and conquered for earth, and heaven, and all worlds. Through eternity, perhaps, visitors from remotest worlds may flock to this point, never satisfied till they see the place where the Deliverer suffered.

SECTION VI.

How the Cross affects those Classes of Intelligent Beings who have never Sinned.

We have seen in Chapter II that the moral government is not one of *force*, but of *motives*. Nor can we, for a moment, receive that theory which regards motives as a species of force, producing effects with mechanical certainty, so that when several motives are present the strongest inevitably dominates the mind. The presence of motives is the *condition* of voluntary action and choice, but the mind in choosing acts freely. Otherwise mental activity would be a mere mechanical operation.

But we have seen also that while this freedom is an essential quality of intelligent natures, and while they are not *controlled by* motives, but act freely with reference to them, yet volition is not necessarily capricious. The mind, in its normal condition, does not act blindly and madly as a general thing. The understanding contemplates various motives, and reason judges between them ordinarily before the final act of choice is reached. And though there is the extreme power of setting the understanding and reason aside and acting in defiance of them, yet it is not commonly done. When a motive of transcendent importance is presented, the action of the will is usually coincident with the facts of the case --at least where the mind is duly informed and impressed. Otherwise there could be no order in society. If volition were not at all under the check of reason and motives, nothing could be calculated upon with reference to its decisions. In that case there could be no

moral government. But the mind has in it a deep consciousness of the fact, that to act upon bad or unworthy motives is a crime against itself--a violation of the laws of its own nature. This is felt even in our depraved condition; how much more fully must it be realized by those creatures who are in a healthy spiritual state. For this reason there may be some estimate made of the effect of motives. We can calculate, with some approximation to truth, upon the result. Hence a government of motives--that is, moral government—becomes a possibility.

Can it be doubted that the history of redemption furnishes motives of the very highest class to all intelligent creatures everywhere--motives to love and obey God? These motives are such as could not have been brought out in any other way. They are found in the fact of God's gift to a lost world and in the sufferings of Christ--the sacrifice of himself, which he made for the salvation of sinners.

Disclosures of the Divine nature are here made that could not otherwise have been made. The blood-writing of the Cross tells us things of God that could not have been proclaimed in another way.

And these disclosures contain influences of the most potential character, binding the creature in allegiance to the Creator. This is not mere conjecture. It seems to me to be a direct consequence of all we know in reference to intelligent natures and the history of the cross. Though we may not regard it with all the faith due to a clearly revealed dogma of religion, I must receive it at least as I do the most evident conclusions of philosophical investigation. And, perhaps, we may yet see reason to respect it as in some degree justified by intimations contained in the word of God.

SECTION VII.

Specific Motives against Sin Furnished by the Cross.

The most effective motives are those which are addressed to the two attributes of the mind — *love* and *fear*. These motives are supplied in their utmost power by the Atonement.

Love is called into play by the manifestation of love. "We love Him because He first loved us." God's tender solicitude for His creatures finds its highest expression in the plan of salvation. The Infinite Love concentrates in the Cross. Rather than see His creatures perish His Son may die. How lovingly He comes down to man in the Incarnation. He comes voluntarily to our condition. He identifies Himself with our sorrow. He mingles with us in our sicknesses and weeps by the side of our graves. He suffers our infirmities. "He is tempted in all points

like as we are," and so is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." He is domiciled amongst us. He allows Himself to become the beneficiary of human hospitalities. He enters into all the tenderness of filial, fraternal and social relations. See Him at His home in Nazareth, and as a guest of Martha and Lazarus at Bethany. He is even born of a woman, investing Himself with our nature. He is "our Elder Brother."

And all this tender history of condescension and love consummates itself in the death He suffered on our account. He takes our shame upon Himself. He takes our guilt and death.

"O! Lamb of God, was ever pain,
Was ever love like thine!"

We have seen that there is a close community of intelligent beings of all classes. So this expression of love to man is in proof of His love to all His creatures. Man's miseries call it out, but Calvary is a love-token given to the whole Universe.

"God is love." After Calvary has been seen in the midst of the eternities this great fact can never more be doubted. Love! The fullness of the word is given in the outcry of the dying Christ. God made flesh, put to shame, put to death, suffering the unutterable, deathly soul-sorrow, is the supreme utterance of it. And this utterance is not made to man only, but to all intelligent beings. It makes itself articulate to the very outposts of the universe. It pours itself into every understanding, and touches and magnetizes every heart.

The cross also speaks to our fears. It is God's final statement of the impossibility of winking at sin. The declaration, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," acquires its highest import from this fact. It is a clear proof that sin can never be pardoned as a mere act of executive clemency. It shows that justice is a supreme consideration in the government of God — a consideration so vital that when

the Son places Himself in the sinner's stead, even *He* must suffer.

We may well believe that the Atonement is a fact never to be repeated. It belongs to earth and time. Only to man, and that in his probationary period, does it offer pardon. These things understood, all who live beyond the limits of time and earth will know that inevitable ruin waits upon sin. There can be no hope for the transgressor. There is no hesitation in the executive power. There are no exempt cases.

In the light of this fact every one who approaches the point of disobedience must shudder at the consequences. There can be no mistake. The lie of the tempter, "ye shall not surely die," is contradicted beforehand — contradicted with an emphasis that can leave no doubt. The instinct of self-preservation will be aroused and act with full vigor. Danger is perceived. Inevitable horrors start up at the mere thought of disobedience. Death

ambushes the soul. Intelligent self regard is on the alert.

The motive of fear, then, is brought into full play, and its value in guarding the creature against a fatal inattention to the authority of the Creator is sufficiently patent.

Its effect, moreover, will be augmented by the knowledge of the fact that the punishment of sin is not the result of a vindictive temper in God, but of administrative justice. The rightness of the infliction will be realized. Justice is one of the expressions of love, for what is the Divine Justice but Love governing the universe for the best ends. The two are really at one. If the punishment of sin were the result of mere passion in God it might arouse a species of reckless, resentful opposition in the creature. But when it is seen to be the authority by which a loving Ruler guards the well-being of his subjects there can be no such effect.

No doubt God is in earnest in His justice.

Love is never more in earnest than when it meets the enemies which threaten those it has in guardianship. The aspect of a mother is terrible to those who would destroy her offspring. Nothing is more terrible than love when it is called out in the face of enemies in the attitude of defense. Now it is this, in part, at least, which constitutes the administrative justice of God. He sets Himself for the defense of His creatures; and if any of them become enemies, and by violating that law which is ordained for the peace of the universe, introduce disorganization and ruin, they must learn that *to them*, putting themselves in this malignant attitude, and making themselves the instruments of evil to His other creatures, "our God is a consuming fire." They must meet the love which flames into wrath toward the adversaries who would destroy the objects of its care. In proportion to the intenseness of the love will be the fury with which it will repel the invader and de-

stroyer. So we read of "the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." It will be seen that justice is rooted in love, and so its threatened exercise will excite no resentment beforehand to lead to reckless rebellion. On the contrary, the effect must be most wholesome. The motive of self-preservation is addressed in such a way as to be seconded by every noble and generous impulse.

In addition to this, the very same fact which contains this revelation of justice--this most appalling exhibition of divine severity--contains also the revelation of love. He who looks on the cross sees both at once. Both motives are appealed to in full measure and by the same voice. Godhead is felt in full force.

Thus, Jesus Christ is the "Word of God" --*the utterance of God*--especially in those two facts, by which His government may be most effectually established over intelligent *free* beings.

"Part of His name divinely stands
On all His creatures writ;

They show the labor of His hands,
Or impress of His feet.
But when we view His strange design
To save rebellious worms,
Where vengeance and compassion join
In their divinest forms,
Our thoughts are lost in reverent awe,
We love and we adore;
The first archangel never saw
So much of God before.
Here the whole Deity is known,
Nor dares a creature guess
Which of the glories brightest shone,
The *justice* or the grace."

SECTION VIII.

The Judgment Day.

There is nothing more definitely stated in the Bible than that God "hath appointed a day" for the final judgment of men. And this day is to be *after* the general resurrection. After "death" delivers up his captives, the dead, "small and great," shall "stand before God" to be "judged according to the deeds done in the body."

I have not had any question of a speculative character more frequently put to me than

this one: "Why are not men judged as soon as they die?" Probation is then at an end. The facts in the case have all transpired. Why any delay?

Many are disposed to doubt if the Scriptures on this point are to be taken literally. An unworthy and sophistical species of exegesis is resorted to--a species of exegesis that would, if followed out generally, unsettle the meaning of all Scripture.

Those who hold to the plain statement of the New Testament have given very sound reasons for the fact that all men are to be judged after the end of the world. The mere fact that it is clearly revealed is sufficient for the faith of true Christians. Yet, if it can be shown that great, good ends are to be attained, the understanding will be gratified. In addition to considerations already familiar with those who have given any special attention to this subject, I offer the following:

The Judgment Day will be the occasion

of bringing out the facts connected with the Atonement in a manner that will command the attention and impress the mind of the universe.

We know that "all the angels" are to be present. So much is stated in the Book. The Bible does not inform us to what extent the universe is populated. But so far as it gives us any knowledge of the existence of intelligent beings, it informs us that they will be called together at the Judgment of our world.

We may be sure that some great *end* is to be accomplished in this universal gathering of the creatures of God to witness the doom of one world. And if the Atonement has the wide significance that I have supposed, we can be at no loss in determining *what* that end is. It is human character and destiny that are immediately touched and affected by the Atonement. And the processes of judgment will bring out all the facts bearing upon human

character and destiny under the Mediatorial administration. Everything that is obscure and misunderstood in this administration will be set in its true light. Every fact made public at that momentous time will increase the knowledge of God among His creatures. "God is love." How divinely will this appear wherever the Cross is seen to touch the destiny of men. God is just. How terribly evident will this be in the history of every saved soul whose penalty Christ bore, and in the case of every lost man who would not accept the cross!

Those only who read the scriptures with earnest attention get any adequate impression of the solemnity and magnitude of the last Judgment. Every circumstance of physical grandeur, as well as moral sublimity, will give dignity to the scene. The conflagration of a world will light the firmament. "The voice of the archangel and the trump of God" will "shake, not the earth only, but also heaven,"

by its irresistible concussion. What changes will take place beyond those on the earth, we know not. What limit is to be placed upon the declaration that the "heavens shall be rolled together like a scroll," and that "there shall be new heavens" as well as a new earth, we can not tell. But evidently the convulsions and changes in nature are to be such as will indicate the presence of a most stupendous event--an event which has some bearing beyond the destiny of a single world.

The term "day" does not limit the time which may be occupied in the final investigation of the earth's affairs. It is the equivalent of "period." The actual length of the judgment period will doubtless be great. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God," and so minute will be the examination in every case that "every secret thing," every *thought*, as well as every word and act of each person of our species, will be brought to light and considered. Of course

we are not so well acquainted with the conditions of being in another world as to understand what time will be required for this.

No doubt it will appear from every separate case that the Infinite Love and the Infinite Justice hold the helm of affairs. And upon the adjudication of the last case, the full measure of testimony will be before all creatures, and the universal shout will burst with spontaneous rapture from every tongue of the unfallen and of the redeemed, "true and righteous are thy judgments, thou King of Saints." Who can imagine the effect upon every spectator? Who can tell the force of that grand appeal to the best and strongest motives which actuate moral agents? This expression, this embodied history of saving love and controlling justice, can never be lost. Made public in a manner so imposing--so overwhelming--it must tend, in an incalculable degree, to establish the authority of God amongst His creatures. It is almost inconceivable that any wit

ness of the events of the last day should ever be deceived, as our first mother was, and thus overcome by temptation. The Cross, all that is expressed by the Cross, will be impressed upon the consciousness of all. The character of God, made apparent in this supreme utterance, must dominate created mind with an attraction and power little less than irresistible.

SECTION IX.

Will there be no more Sin?

1. We have seen that intelligent beings are, in their very constitution, free. Spontaneity of volition is an essential quality of their nature. They can not, therefore, be governed by force without doing them violence.

2. We have also seen that not even motives can operate with mechanical precision in controlling moral agents. On the contrary, they act freely with respect to motives.

3. We have seen, further, that freedom is not necessarily capricious; but that ordinarily

men act, in the common affairs of life, with intelligent reference to the motives involved in the case, so that it is in our power to calculate, with some reasonable degree of assurance, upon the effect of motives, and to foresee the course of conduct men will pursue in given conditions.

4. In view of these facts, we very justly conclude that when the History of Redemption is completed, and the result brought out in the magnificence of the Last Day, such an appeal will be made therein to the motives of unfallen intelligences as will tell with the happiest effect upon their conduct under the Divine Government. Now and then volition may assert itself capriciously, and a spirit give itself up recklessly to ruin against the full attraction of Godhead. But we may well believe that such cases will be rare. For aught we know, God may foresee that none will ever arise.

Obedience will be free. The capacity to

disobey will be realized. No coercion will be felt. Yet the motives to obedience will so overwhelmingly outweigh those on the other side, that to follow the latter would be mere caprice. It would be an extreme and violent assertion of personal power. We can scarcely doubt that obedience to God will be uniform, and that exceptional cases will rarely, if ever, occur.

SECTION X.

The Supreme Appeal to Motives Possible only Through the Cross.

History is invaluable. The result of national history is seen in the national and individual life. Family tradition produces wonderful results upon personal character. The hold of a military leader upon his men is never great until his achievements justify their confidence and admiration. The authority of the parent over his family is never established until it has a history of firmness and love and power.

It is thus that the Past is always expressing itself, and, in some measure, reproducing itself in the present.

It is God's prerogative to educe good out of evil, and so the sin of man has been the occasion of the history which brings God into the clearest light with His creatures. The events which arise out of this condition of ours will be continually exhibiting God, and this great Past is the means by which He will fashion and exalt the eternal Future. And we can not imagine another conjuncture of affairs in which God could have uttered Himself so fully and potentially as He has done in the Atonement. At least it is impossible for *me* to think of any other state of facts which, in this respect, could parallel those connected with this great transaction.

We all see, in common life, how good and evil impinge upon each other, and especially how occasions of good grow out of evil. The crimes and miseries of men are constantly

calling out the sublimest examples of beneficent interposition on the part of the Christian philanthropist. Yet evil does not produce good. It has no such function. It can produce nothing but evil. It only furnishes the *opportunity* to the good that comes from other sources. Evil is of evil, and good is of God. But God, in His infinite power, seizes upon the combinations that arise out of evil, and by them works his own gracious ends. This is in no sense derogatory of the Divine sovereignty. On the contrary, it is a most glorious expression of it. He is Sovereign even over that which defies his law, and can work His own end by its means.

So God makes man's sin the occasion of universal good, by treating it in such a way as to make the noblest, the most touching and divine history—a History which is full of Himself, and by means of which He will be evermore uttering Himself to the understanding and heart of all His creatures in infinite

authority and love. Thus rebellion against His government is made the very means of setting that government upon the most stable foundation.

SECTION XI.

Man's Opportunities.

To all this it will be objected that those individuals of the human race who are lost are, by this theory, sacrificed. It is unjust that they should be made the victims of a policy that looks to the benefit of others, no matter how great the benefit, or how numerous the beneficiaries.

This sinister view of the case is wholly false. For—

1. Man's case is dealt with strictly upon its own merits. The lost man has ample opportunity of salvation. No excuse is left to any. Where sin abounds grace does much more abound. In every case where a man is lost, it is but right that he should suffer the penalty of his misdeeds. The state of the

lost is but the culmination of a wicked life, which is inevitable upon the final rejection of redeeming mercies.

2. Every man has a glorious destiny within his grasp. And this is the fruit of God's great love to him.

3. What God has done for man is done *for his benefit.* Man's case is not a mere stepping-stone to some other end. The cross would lose its significance, and, consequently, its power, if it only made a convenience of man. The Incarnate Son is the infinite yearning of God toward man. If it were not this, it could have no such meaning in the eyes of other beings as I have supposed.

4. Man is distinguished above all other creatures in that the Son took *his* nature, and in that he stands in immediate connection with the Atonement. If he is in the post of greatest danger, he is also at the door of the highest opportunity. With my view of the case, I would rather be a man than belong to

any other class. I would willingly take all the risks in the heat of the conflict, since it brings me so near the "Captain of our salvation." Especially since all the risks must arise from my individual fault; for salvation is absolutely secure to those who will receive it.

The lost man, then, has no place for fault-finding, except against himself.

5. It can make the matter no worse for man if God should make use of the mercies primarily designed for *him* in extending His loving sway over others. And if these results were in the scope of the Divine vision from eternity, this does not at all alter the case. Man's personal kinship with the God-man—the Elder Brother—involves possibilities for him that set the Divine administration in reference to him in the most glorious light. He may stand, if he will, in the inner circle of the Divine affections. Redeemed man is in the place of John at the supper, leaning

upon the very breast of the Son of God. He feels the throbbing of Jehovah's heart. He stands in the very midst of the history of love, and is "part and parcel" of it. And if this position involves him in a stern and dreadful contest, the victor's crown is a fully compensating reward. If he trifles with his opportunities, and is "spendthrift of immortal wares," he has none to accuse but himself.

It is not improbable that among the opportunities of man is that of becoming an active participant of the influences which are to conserve the interests of the universe. The people of God are "workers together with Christ," at least in the more restricted sphere of saving men. Why not, then, in the broader one opening in the great future? Who can tell what the coming eternity may have in store for us? Men are to "judge angels." This may contain a hint of higher destinies than we have ever dared to contemplate. What part may not the redeemed man, so closely

allied to Christ, yet play in the affairs of God's Empire?

But it may be objected again that the great majority of men have no conception of any such high motives--that their character is being formed under very gross influences.

I can only reply that responsibility is graduated by a man's privileges and opportunities. We may not now be able to unravel the tangled web of human affairs so as to discover the justice and propriety of God's dealing with each separate man. We can expect to do no more than ascertain the general drift, and settle the principles upon which God acts. We know that He never requires usury where He has not first bestowed the principal, and the increase He expects is in exact proportion to the talents at first given.

Indeed, it were sheer perverseness in us to doubt that the "Judge of all the earth will do right" because there are complexities in our fallen condition that *we* can not compre-

hend. When so many great facts show the absolute rightness of the Divine character, we may well afford to distrust our own capacity to understand the intricacies involved in the mal-adjustments of a fallen world; and to confide in God, well assured that every fact will ultimately appear as a witness for His glory. He who gave His Son to die for us will not be wanting in the minor details of a merciful administration. At any rate, the general fact remains, that in assuming our nature the Son exalted and glorified humanity, and receives it into intimacy with Himself; and we may well accept this as a compensation for all our disabilities. Further than this we may rest assured that, to those who will accept it, this great fact opens eternity in the most advantageous relations.

SECTION XII.

Scripture Intimations.

The Bible was intended to enlighten man upon those matters which appertain to his own condition, duty and destiny. Whatever it contains beyond this is incidental. We are not, therefore, to expect any positive information in respect to the effect which the Atonement may produce upon the general affairs of the universe. If we get anything upon this point it must be in an occasional and incidental way.

I propose to offer several scriptures which seem to me to point to the theory set forth in this chapter. Indeed, there are some of these passages in which I can see no meaning at all if these speculations be not true.

1. *The Son is the Creator.* The Word was with God--was God--and *by Him* all things were made, and without Him was not anything made that was made. John i. 1, 3.

What striking formality of statement! He created all things--not this earth only, but *all things*. The emphasis and repetition of the statement are significant. That the "all things" is not limited to the earth and what it contains is evident from Col. i. 16, 17. "For by Him (Christ) were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." Let it be noted--1, that the Creator is Christ; 2, that He created *all things*, in heaven as well as on earth, invisible as well as visible; and, 3, that all things were made *for* Him, indicating *direct interest and proprietorship* on His part in all these things. Wherever space is occupied with finite being it is the work of the SON.

Perhaps the fact that the second Person of the Trinity was immediately engaged in the

work of Redemption may stand directly in connection with the fact that He was the immediate Agent in the work of creation. May we not safely infer that, in virtue of His creative agency, He stands in some *special* relation to subordinate existences, and may not this account for the fact that of the Persons of the Trinity it was He who became incarnate and assumed the office of Redeemer?

And, as in the first instance as Creator, He stands in this close relation to the whole Universe, is it not reasonable to suppose that, as Redeemer, He should also contemplate the advantage of the whole? This inference, by itself, may not have much value as an argument, but, taken in connection with what I have already presented, and with what is to follow, it is not wholly unimportant.

2. In further confirmation I offer the fact of the *universality of the Dominion of Christ.* "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."Mat. xxviii. 18. God

the Father, when He raised Christ from the dead, "set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." Eph. i. 20, 23. In reference to these passages I remark--1. That it is not only the Son, but the *Son in His Mediatorial character*---as Messiah---that has all power, and is Head over all things. 2. That *in His Mediatorial office* His dominion is universal--not confined to the earth. 3. That while this unlimited sway is given to Him *for the Church*, it implies a close relationship between the Church and all other subjects of His authority. 4. It justifies the supposition that all the other subjects of His dominion have an interest in Him as their Messiah. For

though His Kingdom contemplates as its first object the Church, we can scarcely understand why it should be extended over all creatures if the only advantage from it were confined to man.

3. "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Eph. ii. 4,7. "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; to the intent that now unto the principalities

and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God." Eph. iii. 8, 10.

(1) These are remarkable passages. I have never seen the word riches in any position where it meant so much as it does here. "The riches of His grace---the riches of Christ." Parallel to this is the phrase "The manifold wisdom of God." Thought hesitates in the presence of these expressions. They intimate a truth that spurns the boundaries of definition. I can think of but one single word that is fit for service in this connection—unutterable!

(2) These riches--this manifold wisdom--are contained *in the Church*. The Son of God humbling himself in the incarnation, suffering among men, giving himself up to death *for* men, rendering mercy triumphant, and in the same act vindicating justice, thus establishing the Church and saving and glorifying men--these facts--this work of God--

this divine history is the treasury of these riches, the repository and exponent of this wisdom.

(3) The Church is the witness of all this to "the ages to come," and to the "principalities and powers in heavenly places." It is God's last and highest utterance of Himself. Grace and justice in the manifold wisdom of their Administration in the Atonement are discovered to be ultimate and infinite in the Godhead. In all the coming ages, and in all the heavenly places, to the highest orders of creatures, and, we may well believe, to all intelligent beings, the Church is to make God manifest in the inexpressible facts of its history. No words could express Him. It required *facts*. It required a history. It required an incarnate God carrying on the redeeming work by the Holy Spirit in a living Church. And the judgment of the last Day is to bring them out in full disclosure before all eyes. Thus Jesus Christ, as I have before

hinted, is "the Word of God"--the utterance of God.

And the tones in which God pronounces Himself in the ears of His creatures must call responses from every cord of intelligent consciousness. His government, appealing to all by its infinite justice, goodness, grace and wisdom, made articulate by Christ in the Church, will receive the joyful allegiance of all, to the utmost boundaries of the creation; and the foundations of the universe will be jarred by the shout, "Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." When the capstone of the Temple of Redemption is laid, it will be brought forth with shoutings--"grace, grace unto it." A jubilant Universe will bind itself in eternal fealty to God. Everywhere it will be felt that the highest glory of the creature is in the glory of the Creator.

4. I will submit two other passages to the intelligent consideration of those who may read this book. If they teach anything they

teach great things. The first is Eph. i. 10. "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in God." The other is Col. i. 20. "And having made peace through the blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." In both these places Macknight gives in his translation instead of *heaven, the heavens.* No one, I presume, doubts that this is the correct translation. The statement embraces all worlds. All things, in all worlds, are brought together--are "reconciled to God"--by Christ. Pause for a moment and consider the import of this wonderful declaration. Whatever else may be in it, at least this is, that *Christ* is exerting a controlling influence throughout the entire universe. Clearly the Apostle intends us

to receive the words, "all things," without any limitation of space.

It may be objected that the term "reconciled" implies that those who are referred to are such only as had been alienated from God —that any hypothesis of the manner in which unfallen beings are affected by the Atonement does not meet the case. In other words, all who are "reconciled" by Christ must have been previously in an unreconciled condition.

I submit the following as meeting the exigencies of interpretation in the case:

Sin became aggressive when the devil succeeded in alienating man from God. A process of disorganization, disintegration and alienation from God was then initiated. A disturbing, alienating influence was felt. A tendency adverse to God and His government must have supervened upon the final success of this satanic diplomacy.

The interposition of Christ put an effectual check upon this course of things. The alien-

ating influence was neutralized, the tendency in that direction overcome. The universe was recovered from this sinister condition. Perfect reconciliation throughout the heavens is the result. The government of God is better established over the reason and heart of His creatures than it could otherwise have been. Alienation is forestalled, and reconciliation anticipates the fatal result.

This exigesis seems to me to be not unnatural, and to meet all the facts better than any other. The reconciliation is predicated of "all things in the heavens" as well as on earth, and if it refers only to such as were once alienated, then *all things*, even the angels, must have been at some time aliens from God. But we know this is not so, for many of them have "kept their first estate." I can scarcely see how the truth of the exposition I have given can be doubted.

The government of God binds the Universe together in love and peace. The great and

central commandment is Love. This is the harmonizing principle. It holds all things together. Sin disintegrates. It is the self asserting itself against all things, and so is a disorganizing agency. Every distinct personality asserts itself against every other. Here is disruption. Christ comes to restore love. He arrests the disturbing tendency by intensifying the divine attraction. He is the magnet, charged to the last degree with love and sorrow, and all unfallen natures respond to the supreme attraction. He "gathers together all things, both in the heavens and in the earth."

In other words, the Atonement is a conservative power in the universe. It comtemplates not only the salvation of man, but the preservation of all worlds from sin.

I submit that the two passages last cited can mean nothing less than this.

SECTION XIII.

The Word.

God becomes known to his creatures through two media--His own Declarations and Acts. "The pure in heart shall see God." The precise force of the word "see" in *this* place we do not pretend to know. I have sometimes thought that we shall hereafter have direct perception of the divine Essence. The very substance of the Uncreated may become apparent to the holy. But even in that case the moral nature of God can be known only by what He says and what He performs. Indeed, His "power and Godhead," I suppose, can not be otherwise known.

Now, this *expression* of the Godhead is the office of the Son, and for *this reason*, I doubt not, it is that "His name is called, The Word of God." Rev. xix. 13.

I imagine there are many who regard the Incarnation as the only Manifestation of God

in Christ. This is a great mistake. I have shown, in Section XII, that creation and government are both the work of Christ. And I believe it will appear that Godhead becomes active and productive *only* through the Son. This is clearly, if I am not prodigiously misled, the doctrine of the Scripture upon this subject. Note carefully the terms in which the work of creation is set forth. "God created all things by Jesus Christ." Eph. iii. 9. "*By* whom (the Son) also He (God) made the worlds." Heb. i. 2. "But to us there is but one God, the Father, OF whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ BY whom are all things, and we by Him." 1 Cor. viii. 6. Consider the force of the prepositions, *of* God, *by* Christ. I pretend no explanation of the relation between the Persons of the Trinity. I deal simply with the plain statements of the Bible. The work of God is done by Christ.

This is true not only in creation. "By

Him (Christ) all things *consist*." Col. i. 17. Thus the work of Providence is His. We have already seen that the government--Universal government---"is upon his shoulder." Redemption is His work; but no more peculiarly than creation, for in the one case GOD creates BY Christ, and in the other "GOD is IN Christ reconciling the world unto himself." Final judgment, as we have before seen, is in the hands of the Son.

God is Manifest in *all* these works---not in redemption only. "The heavens declare the glory of God." "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." Rom. i. 20. Everything He does is, in some measure, an expression of His nature and character. *But He does everything by Christ*---creates, upholds, governs, redeems, judges, *through the Son*, who is, therefore, the Word, the expression of the Father.

It is also by the Son that He "has spoken to us." And if the Jehovah of the Old Testament is the Christ of the New, as I doubt not He is, it would seem that God has always communicated with man only through the Son.

I have said that God becomes known to His creatures only by His declarations and acts. And indeed we have no other method of knowing even men. We can never tell what manner of man our neighbor is till we have heard his speech and observed his conduct. It is what comes out of him that discovers what is in him. The force that we see him put forth proves the fact of his power, and the extent of it.

The forth-going of God is through the Son. Godhead utters Himself no otherwise, so far as we know, but by Christ; and the facts already given from the Scriptures seem to establish that there is no exception. Christ Jesus is the utterance--"outerance"--of God. He is the WORD OF GOD. And this is not at all

confined to the Incarnation and redemption, but holds with respect to all the manifestations of God in this and all worlds, to us and all creatures.

But to us men, and I hold also that to all His creatures, God is more imminent in the Incarnation than in any other fact. He comes down nearer to us and takes us up closer to Him. His voice becomes more fully articulate. A broader disclosure of Himself is made. He exposes Himself to a deeper insight. All this appears in preceding Sections of this Chapter.

Now, can it be that The Word in this its last and most precious meaning is an utterance to man alone; to *one class only* of His intelligent creatures? No! No! No! It is fully articulate to the remotest places of His Empire. Can you question this?

Its meaning and melody are to charm all ears, and enrapture all hearts, in all "the worlds" He has made, in all "the ages to

come." It is the key-note of all spiritual harmonies in the heavens as in the earth. Worship culminates in the Song of the Lamb. Through the Incarnation GLORY IN THE HIGHEST is given to God.

All the harpers that praise God in eternity will gather inspiration in their worship from the cross--the last, divinest import of The Word.

SECTION XIV.

The Consummation.

Christ "shall reign until He hath put all things under Him," and then, when all enemies are "put under His feet," "when all things shall be subdued unto Him," "He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father," and "The Son Himself shall be subject to Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

We have already seen that the Mediatorial government is exceptional and anomalous. It is a departure from the ordinary process of

the Divine Administration. It is a special Administration looking to special ends.

When these ends are secured and the special purpose consummated, this administration of affairs will cease. Messiah's Kingdom will be given up to the Father, government revert to its primary condition, and God be all in all.

Perhaps even then the government will be administered through the Son, as Godhead seems ever hitherto to work through Him. But the *Mediatorial* character of it will be at an end. The special and exceptional character of it, ordained for purposes of pardon and redemption, will cease. But the results of this great epoch in the Empire of God will not cease. The history of the Reign of Christ--of Christ as God-man--will remain, and the moral effect of it be in full force. The conflict, and the Chief who entered upon it in behalf of the Universe, will never pass out of mind. "He ever liveth" amid the fruits of his victories,

to "see the travail of His soul and be satisfied."

The period of the Redemption will be the central point of the universal History, and all events will be seen in its light. It will abide forever in the records of the ages as God's brightest manifestation of Himself.

It will evermore be the great Heroic Period. It will give tone to the literature of eternity. Thought will be forever evolving fresh phases of truth from its events. Poetry will be evermore resorting to it for inspiration and for themes; and adoration will kindle itself into fervor by perpetual recurrence to its facts.

SECTION XV.

New Creations.

We know not whether the work of creation is at an end. It would be arrogant in us to assume to decide such a question. Space is broad enough and eternity is long enough for God's work. Who can say that the Divine fecundity has exhausted itself?

If new worlds are hereafter to be made; if, after the last judgment, new races of intelligent beings are to be created, there must be, we may suppose, some method of bringing them under the power of that influence which proceeds from the cross.

May this not be a field of employment for redeemed man? Who so fit as they to become instructors of new worlds in the history of the Atonement. Themselves the immediate beneficiaries of the cross, and spectators of its disclosures, they may be God's best witnesses. Fully imbued with the spirit of the Atonement, and in immediate sympathy with the Divine Sufferer, they may be His most trusted Missionaries. The immediate kindred of the Savior, they must be, as one would think, His best representatives.

Here are opportunities of achievment worthy of immortal ambition.

Here may be, in part at least, the answer of the question, "What are to be the employments of the Redeemed?"

CHAPTER IV.

Recapitulation.

The sum of what I have written may be stated as follows:

1. Freedom is an essential attribute of spiritual being. It is of the essence of spirit to be self-active. It acts of its own motion.

2. Freedom necessarily involves the possibility of sin in created beings, because the law is not subjective in them as it is in God, but objective to them. It is *over* them and not *in* them as an essential element of their nature. The law is the will of another--God--and must, therefore, by necessity, stand in the relation of an *object* to them. They must act freely with respect to it, as to all objective things.

3. The liability to sin could have been avoided in no other way than *not to have*

produced intelligent life. Creation must have paused upon a lower level. In that case God's work could have had no high import or dignity.

4. The government of free beings is one of *motives* and not of *force.* Nor can motives *act as force* to produce results with mechanical precision.

5. Yet the mind does not commonly act from mere caprice. It acts with respect to motives, and where motives are very commanding its action is almost always co-incident with them--so much so that we calculate with reasonable certainty upon the course that will be taken in given conditions. This is true of man, even in his fallen condition, in many respects. It is probably more uniformly the case with those who are in a normal spiritual condition.

6. Sin originated with the creature. It is an *act done* and not a *thing existing.* It is an act of free creatures. It is an act

against the law and against the Author of the law. The law is God's, the violation is the creature's. Sin originated with the first sinner. God created beings capable of spontaneous action. *They* sinned.

7. Angels first sinned. Afterward they instigated man to sin. Man, sinning under external temptation, and the sinning individual standing at the head of a race, was redeemed. The Atonement was provided. The Atonement is a revelation of God in a new light. It is the ultimate expression of His love and justice, and appeals in the most commanding and touching manner to the motives of self-preservation and love in the creature.

8. By these potential motives brought fully into play, if the spread of sin is not wholly prevented, we may believe it will be very nearly so. Indeed, I see not but that free beings may be restrained, by this means, entirely from the violation of God's law. They *can* sin; otherwise they would not be free.

But, with these high motives to obedience, when they are in full and universal operation, may we not rest in assured confidence that none ever will.

9. Until there had beeen a history of sin there could have been no atonement--no such touching history of Love. No such awful history of Justice appealing to God's creatures. Sin was not appointed, nor was it allowed *for this purpose*. But it was God's prerogative, *after it did occur*, to make it the occasion of this resplendent manifestation of Himself for the grand purposes which we have named. And, doubtless, there was foreknowledge of all this before the work of creation was begun.

10. All violators of the law are without excuse. *Man* certainly has no right to complain in view of the opportunities the Atonement opens to him, and the infinite expenditure of love made upon him. Of the history of the sinning *angels* we know but little, but that

they are wholly chargeable with their own sins we can not question. And it may be that in their case the Creator has provided some compensation for the fact that they met their trial without the advantage of the motives supplied by the Atonement. We may be sure that He has done all for His creatures of all classes that the nature of the case would admit.

11. The Judgment Day will afford a grand occasion for publishing the facts connected with the Atonement, and so bringing them to bear effectively throughout the universe as motives to obedience.

12. The Scriptures clearly ascribe the peace of the Universe to Christ and His work. See the Section on this point.

13. Creative beneficence is not disparaged by the self-destruction of those who perish. That beneficence could be realized in no order of beings below the spiritual. Evil was not inherent in things, but the possibility of its introduction was necessarily incident to the

creation of beings of this class. The product of creative Love is a universe populous with free, obedient, intelligent, glorious beings. The evil which darkens upon the fair order, here and there, in spite of all the safe-guards provided by the Creator, is no blot upon His love.

14. The eternal death of the wicked is an awful fact. The Bible teaches it. It teaches nothing with greater distinctness or emphasis. Men may not trifle with the law of God. In alienating themselves from Him they pervert their own nature and cut themselves off from the Source of blessedness. But God did not leave space a blank from the foreknowledge that some of His creatures would use their freedom perversely. Such a fact was no just cause that countless multitudes should not exist and be blessed.

15. The happy course of events and development in the spiritual domain, momentarily jostled and threatened by the introduction of

sin, is restored by the Deliverer under better auspices and with the surest guarantees.

16. New creations may be evermore extending the glorious triumphs of Infinite Love and widening the domain of finite Blessedness.

17. The mystery of evil is better solved by Christianity than by any other system.

(1.) It does not make light of evil. It does not make sin a trifle. It invests the government of God with infinite sacredness. It represents guilt as an awful and bitter thing. All this meets with a solemn response in our own consciousness.

(2.) It invests human life with a high and solemn significance. We feel that this is true.

(3.) It teaches that every individual is responsible for his own destiny. We see that this ought to be so.

(4.) It teaches that the evils which are inherent in our present condition have been brought upon us by our representative--the first father of the race--and that they are met

and compensated by the advantages secured by a second representative--Christ. They are not the work of some horrible fate.

(5.) It reveals God in Christ in an infinitely glorious light. It discovers in Him the infinite Love, and in virtue of this, also, the infinite Justice; in which his creatures have an equal interest.

(6.) This revelation of God in Christ is made primarily for man--but ultimately, also, for all worlds.

This satisfies me. My heart and reason are satisfied. My faith and hope are satisfied. The Bible is true, and "God is Love."

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